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Master's Thesis

**The Relationship Between Satisfaction
and Travel Characteristics of
International Tourists in Luang Prabang,
Laos**

February 2018

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The relationship between satisfaction and travel characteristics of international tourists, in Luang Prabang, Laos

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Submitting a master's thesis

February 2018

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Abstract

The tourism development is growing rapidly in the world especially in developing countries. In Laos, tourism is the second most important industry, and provide significant revenue to the economy. To encourage the strategy, the Lao PDR started planning for developing and promoting various tourism destinations. Luang Prabang is one of the targets of tourism development based on the Lao national development plan due to the town's fame for its cultural and natural diversity. To increase tourists' visitation of Luang Prabang, and to encourage the consumption of products and services, and increase repeated visits, the tourist satisfaction needs to be measured. Tourists' satisfaction is perceived as an assessment tool to evaluate travel experiences. Hence, the achievement of best tourists' satisfaction is essential for the succession and survival of the destination. High visitor satisfaction lead to positive promotion through word-of-mouth, and consequently to revisits, which ultimately affect the financial performance of suppliers associated with the tourism industry. Therefore, a comparative analysis of different type of tourists is required to better understand the importance of the markets with their different travel characteristic and satisfaction.

This study aims to gain a better understanding of satisfaction of nature and culture based tourist by examining their experiences. The difference

between their satisfaction level and travel characteristics are needed more clarification analysis and compare. These also explore the direct impacts of the perceived experiences and individual characteristics and overall satisfaction. Such information can be very useful for planners to improve the attractiveness of the destination for the longer term. It should contribute to understand the relationships between international tourists' characteristics, and their level of satisfaction. This can also help policymaking in formulating future strategies for tourist destination management, contributing to sustainable development, especially in Luang Prabang Province.

This research has two objectives: 1) to examine the relationship between socio-demographic aspects, travel characteristics of international tourists and the categories of tourist defined based on the most popular destinations; 2) to examine whether there are differences in international tourist satisfaction levels based on different aspects of Luang Prabang tourism. The survey was conducted from April to September 2017 at three selected main points, Luang Prabang International airport; traditional-cultural tourist places; and natural tourist places. A total of 2,011 surveys were completed. This study employed descriptive statistics to analyze the demographic data. Chi-Square, t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to reveal the relationship among socio-demographic aspects of international tourists, and to examine international tourist satisfaction.

The result of the study shows that there is a difference in socio-demographic aspects and travel characteristics among the three types of tourists, namely the eco-tour tourists, cultural/historic tourists, and the tourists who like to visit eco-tour and cultural sites. Furthermore, the analysis of the satisfaction level of tourists shows that the eco-tourists are highly satisfied with accommodation standard, followed by tourism attraction. The cultural tourists show high satisfaction overall in most of the aspects measured. the eco-tour cultural visitors have higher satisfaction level in tourism attraction, accommodation, public safety and security, than other tourist types.

Keywords: Travel characteristics, Satisfaction, international tourists,
Tourism, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, Laos

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Tourism has boasted virtually uninterrupted growth over time, and Tourism is one of the largest world industries and provides a considerable range of potential benefits, including the development of intercultural interaction, the stimulation of peace and understanding, personal benefit to tourist, and economic growth and prosperity for tourism destinations (UNWTO 2016). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2016), the number of international tourist arrivals have increased from 25 million in 1950 to 674 million in 2000 and reaching a record of 1,186 million arrivals worldwide in 2015, when the billion mark was exceeded for the first time ever. Although, the average annual growth in was 3.9 % in the worldwide while was 7.9% average a year in South-East Asia from 2005-2015. This steady and fast growth of international tourism in the region has resulted in strong competition among the destinations to attract international tourists (Ragavan, Subramonian et al. 2014).

The tourism development is growing rapidly in global especially in developing country like Laos. Therefore, tourism is a mentionable second income industry of Laos. Laos is located in Southeast Asia, and nowadays it

is called “The Lao People’s Democratic Republic: Lao PDR)”. Due to the large wealth of natural and cultural heritage resources, there has been a sudden growth in international tourist arrivals to Laos (UNCTAD 2014). As the tourism and Ecotourism’s current play role in expanding economic opportunity in developing countries (Ashley, De Brine et al. 2007, KIM, Kang et al. 2013, Rajaguru 2016). It is one of the most important and significant economic sectors in Laos. From the driven by trends in global tourism, the number of tourists visiting Laos each year has virtually increased four-time in the past ten years. The Tourism development department of Laos estimates that the number of tourists visiting reached 4 million in 2015 from 1,1 million in 2005, with an average growth rate of 13.90%, the revenue earned has been increasing up to 725 million (USD) in 2015. As the result of its strategic location in South-East Asia, Lao PDR is considered to be an “add-on destination” (Tourism Development Department 2016).

To encourage the strategy, the Lao PDR had started planning for developing and promoting various tourism destinations in the country from 2006-2020 (LNTA 2005). It has to focus on sustainable and participatory manner developing in term of culture, natural and historical tourism that can strongly generate income for local people and contribute to socio-economic development and poverty reduction. Luang Prabang is one of the target city of tourism development based on the Lao national development planned

cause of the town is a very famous country for its cultural and natural diversity, and well known because of its attractions. Different places of the country are full of cultural, natural, and historical heritage places, which are the major attractions and the assets of the nation¹. The city's popularity further increased when it was named by Wanderlust Magazine as the Top City for tourism in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2015 respectively². While culture-based tourism is primarily dominant in these areas, attempts have been made to diversify the already known main product offerings by developing cultural and heritage, adventure, and natural tourism. They add value to tourist experiences and help to create new tourist markets (Kastenholz, Davis et al. 1999).

Not only the number of visits to Luang Prabang is growing up rapidly. But also the number of tourism-related businesses is expanding provide the services for tourists as well. As can see that, between 1997 and 2016, the tour agents, hotels, guesthouses, resorts, restaurants and entertainment establishments in Luang Prabang grew from 58 to 591 units. In 1995, only 16,230 international tourists visited Luang Prabang but reached 643,319 in 2016 (Tourism Development Department 2017). Although, Tourist

¹ Tourism Marketing Department, "Tourism in Laos". <http://www.tourismloos.org>. (accessed January 5, 2018).

² Wanderlust Travel Magazine. "Best city". <http://www.wanderlust.co.uk>. (accessed 5 January 5, 2018).

destinations often rely on tourism as their principal source of economic development (Iniesta-Bonillo, Sánchez-Fernández et al. 2016). However, a development that is not properly planned can have destructive effects on cultural sites, natural resources and local communities (LNTA 2005). Therefore, sustainability is a crucial factor in the growth and competitiveness of a tourist destination (Mazanec, Wöber et al. 2007). Furthermore, tourists' satisfaction is perceived as an assessment tool to evaluate travel experiences and has an important impact on destination decision making, products, and service consumption, and repeat visit intentions (Lu, Chi et al. 2015). Hence, the achievement of best tourists' satisfaction is essential for the success and survival of any destination.

From the studies in recent years has indicated that tourists' satisfaction has been considered as a tool for increasing destination competitiveness (Thaothampitak and Weerakit 2012, Xayavong 2013, Mohammad Mehedy Hassan and Shahnewaz 2014, Sirisack, Xayavong et al. 2014, Thongmala Phosikham, Anoulom Vilayphone et al. 2015). As Mazanec, Wöber et al. (2007) have identified that in tourism, high resulting satisfaction lead to positive word-of-mouth, referrals, and revisits, which ultimately affect the financial performance of suppliers associated with the tourism industry. Most tourism product providers, as well as destination management organizations, carried on regular visitor satisfaction surveys. Moreover, several research

works in the field of tourism have recently focused on the study of overall satisfaction in particular tourist destinations (Kim and Brown 2012, Ragavan, Subramonian et al. 2014). The research of satisfaction on the basis of quality and its individual factors is important for destination managers as it helps them improve the core product and the promotion of the region within the target groups (Yoon and Uysal 2005).

During the recent years, while the tourism in Luang Prabang has been under developing and promoting for the specific tourism site such the unique cultural activities, historical places and the natural sites for attracting tourists come to the best destination. On the other hand, the numerous of tourist-related business has been rapidly growing up as well. In contrast, firstly while the extending in tourism sectors, there is some gap in regulation of tourism development. Second, the number of visitors is increasing in each year. Thus, in 2016, Tourism Development Department (2017) of Laos showed the statistics the number of tourist arrivals decreased about 10% (dropped from 4,684,429 to 4,239,047). Consequently, the study in satisfaction of visitor to the quality of services in component tourism in Luang Prabang is very important for sustainable tourism development (Drakulić Kovačević, Kovačević et al. 2017). According to Mazanec, Wöber et al. (2007), they found out that while destination competitiveness is usually interpreted as the destination's ability to provide the visitors with a satisfying, unforgettable

experience and consequently increase the number of visitors and the destination's revenue, the concept remains on a definitional level. Therefore, a comparative analysis of the kind of tourist's category is required to better understand (Senesathith and Ki 2016) the importance of an understanding of different travel characteristic and tourists' satisfaction.

This study aims to gain a better understanding of satisfaction in nature and culture based tourism by examining experiences reported by visitors. The difference between their satisfaction level and travel characteristics are needed more clarification analysis and compare. these also explore the direct impacts of the perceived experiences and individual characteristics and overall satisfaction. Such information can be very useful for planners to improve the attractiveness of the destination for the longer term. The results of this study will benefit local government and tourism-related authorities, tourism-related business units and local communities. It should assist in understanding the relationships between international tourists' characteristics, and their level of satisfaction. This can also help policymaking in formulating future strategies for tourist destination management in the way of sustainable development, especially in Luang Prabang Province, and help increasing regional market players.

1.2. Objectives of study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1) to examine the relationship between socio-demographic aspect, travel characteristics of international tourists and the categories of tourist based on the most popular destinations.

2) to examine whether there are differences in international tourist satisfaction levels based on different aspects of Luang Prabang tourism.

Finally, the results of this study will benefit local government and tourism-related authorities, tourism-related business units and local communities. assist in understanding the relationship between international tourists' characteristics, their level of satisfaction in each tourism destination. This can also help in formulating future strategies for sustainable development of tourism in cultural/historical sites and nature conservation sites, especially in Luang Prabang Province.

1.3. Research question

Following the research objectives, the questions mention below will be analyzed and answered throughout my research. The questions are:

1) what is the relationship of socio-demographic aspects with different types of international tourists traveling in Luang Prabang?

2) what is the relationship in travel characteristics with different types of international tourists traveling in Luang Prabang?

3) What are the differences in the satisfaction level of international tourists from different aspects of Luang Prabang tourism?

1.4. Hypothesis of study

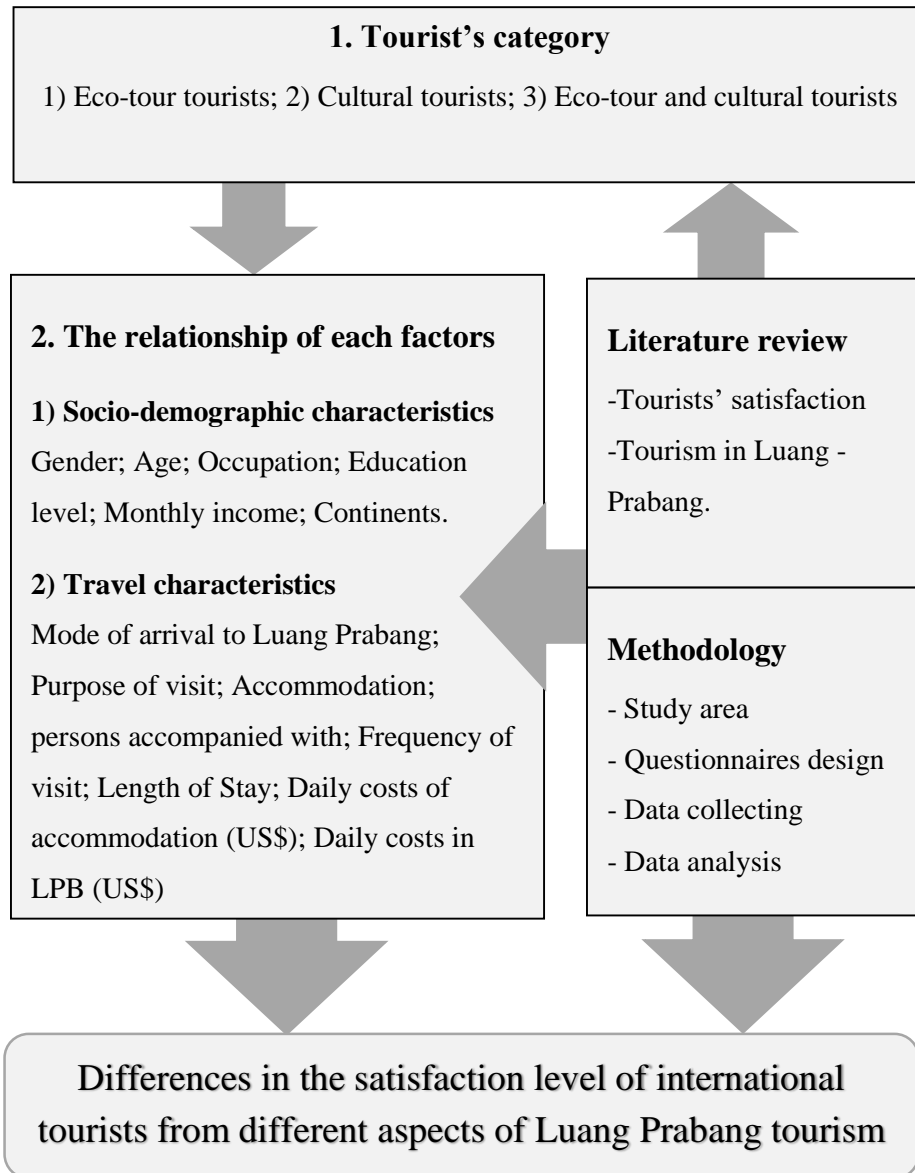
According to Victor Teplyakov (2013), a hypothesis is an explanation of the phenomenon or as a possible answer to the research question. In this study following hypothesis below:

Hypothesis 1: the relationship in socio-demographic aspects with different types of international tourists traveling in Luang Prabang is no difference.

Hypothesis 2: the relationship in travel characteristics with different types of international tourists traveling in Luang Prabang is no difference.

Hypothesis 3: the satisfaction level of international tourists from different aspects of Luang Prabang tourism are not differences

1.5. Structure of study



CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

These parts, have shown the content related to the tourist's satisfaction in the destination and the previous study in tourism as below:

2.1. Tourists' satisfaction

Tourists' satisfaction is an important factor in the successful marketing of heritage and cultural tourism because it affects the selection of destination, consumption of service and decision to revisit as Kozak (2003), defined the tourists' satisfaction that the tourists want to have more than one experience at a destination. When they visit, they stay at a hotel, often eat and drink somewhere outside the hotel, go shopping, communicate with local people and other tourists, and visit natural, cultural, or historic places. On the supply side, the trip is not a single product; it is made up of components supplied by a variety of organizations with different objectives. As McIntyre, Hetherington et al. (1993) describe the destination as "the location of a cluster of attractions and related tourist facilities and services which a tourist or tour group selects to visit or which providers choose to promote". And Coltman (1989) presents a more comprehensive definition as being "an area with different natural attributes, features, or attractions that appeal to non-local

visitors—that is, tourists or excursionists”. All these elements make a contribution to tourists having more experiences with their vacations.

Based on the basic theory above in the context of tourism, satisfaction is primarily referred to as a function of pre-travel expectations and post-travel experiences. When experiences compared to expectations result in feelings of gratification, the tourist is satisfied (policy 2007). However, when they result in feelings of displeasure, the tourist is dissatisfied (Reisinger and Turner 2003).

In tourism studies, overall satisfaction tourists’ measuring with specific destination has become the point of interest in the majority. The satisfaction in overall tourist can be measured in terms of perceived performance of the distinct services which tourists encounter in different phases throughout the travel period (Geva 1991) such as that in the transportation sectors, accommodation, restaurants, travel agencies, shopping places, and spot environment as well. The variable of overall satisfaction in tourism destination has reviewed the particular items of satisfaction attribute to tourist’s experiences received after traveled.

Therefore, Ramires, Brandão et al. (2017) studied the motivation-based cluster analysis of international tourists visiting a world heritage city: The case of Porto, Portugal. It suggests that, the destination attributes that most influence satisfaction is specific elements of tourism supply, such as

gastronomy, accommodation, culture and entertainment, and hospitality. The results provide valuable information and insights both for academics and for destination managers, who can then adjust their marketing and management endeavors according to selected markets and their specific needs of target groups.

In others, there are several studied in the satisfaction level of visitors to determine the service, quality of destination to make more motivation such tourism destination competition for increasing the numbers of visitors, improve the marketing strategy. Cong (2016) focuses on the relationship between destination quality, tourist satisfaction, and loyalty intention a case study in an empirical test in Vietnam. The result of this study provides deeper insight into the role of different dimensions of perceived destination quality in increasing tourist satisfaction and loyalty intention, by means of which it can help managers and marketers make more accurate predictions and adopt appropriate strategies to improve tourist loyalty.

In addition, Bui and Le (2016) study on tourist satisfaction and destination image of Vietnam's Ha Long Bay. the results suggest that international visitors have higher standards and are more critical in their evaluation of services than domestic visitors when judging this destination. Basic and augmented services were found to influence international visitors' future intention toward the destination. This finding implies that the

destination managers need to improve the current standard of augmented services to yield higher visitors' propensity to recommend and return to the destination. Moreover, Yu and Goulden (2006) focus on a comparative analysis of international tourists' satisfaction in Mongolia. This study identified the demographic characteristics of international tourists from four regions, the satisfaction level of international tourists from these four different regions were analyzed and compared to find regional similarities and differences. Recommendations were made for the Mongolian tourism authority to target efficiently its international tourism markets and improve tourism services in Mongolia.

2.2. Tourism in Luang Prabang

There are several researchers conducted a research related to tourism in Luang Prabang. These included United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO 2004) examined the impact of tourism on the culture and environment of Luang Prabang and provided guidelines for identifying and measuring the types of impacts (both positive and negative) that tourism has on the town's heritage.

Furthermore, the UNESCO (2004) recommended how to derive an overall strategy that manages tourism in Luang Prabang in such a manner that

tourism becomes a positive force for heritage conservation as well as contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of the town's inhabitants. Phommavong (2008) sought to identify how to quantify service quality by using the SERVQUAL gap model ($Q = PE$) and moreover to compare service delivery of major hotels and guesthouses in Luang Prabang province. As Somesamone (2010) used a qualitative approach to examine the current state of tourism and tourism development in Luang Prabang. The result found that the facilities and the quality of services provided to tourists do not meet international standards and are still limited due to a lack of human resources, specifically people who have knowledge and capacity working in the tourism sector. Thus, she suggests that it is necessary to have qualified staff to manage businesses related to tourism.

The study by Southiseng and Walsh (2011) confirmed that significant increases in tourists' arrivals to Luang Prabang have provided opportunities to the residents of Luang Prabang to earn income and increase their knowledge and levels of experience. However, the study argues that substantial gains were not sustainable due to the lack of qualified labor to supply the booming sectors. Moreover, Xayavong (2013) tried to find out the specific case study on the characteristics, motivations, and satisfaction of Thai tourists who visit Luang Prabang province. The study found that: Thai tourists preferred to travel with organized groups, friends, as a couple and with family

members. They stayed in Luang Prabang between three and four days and spent relatively high amounts, approximately 1,950 Baht (67 US\$) and 1,507 Baht (52 US\$) per day for accommodations and for food & drink, respectively. Almost all of the Thai tourists visited and were satisfied with visiting Wat Xieng Thong and the National Museum of Luang Prabang. Also, the activity that most of the Thai tourist participated and felt most satisfied in was almsgiving. Furthermore, after their trip, Thai visitors felt high satisfaction.

In others, Sirisack, Xayavong et al. (2014) studied specifically on the characteristics and motivations of foreign tourists who visit Luang Prabang. The results found that the regression analysis between overall satisfaction and each push motivation factor show the ‘Opportunity to increase one’s knowledge’ and ‘Escape from the routine/ordinary’ factor had the greatest positive impact on overall satisfaction. Moreover, the ‘Friendliness, politeness and hospitality’ factor had the greatest positive impact on the overall satisfaction among pull factors. Later that, Thongmala Phosikham, Anoulom Vilayphone et al. (2015) has studied more about the relationships between International tourists’ travel characteristics, Their Sources of Information, and Their Level of Satisfaction Based On Socio-Demographics, In Luang Prabang Province, Lao PDR. The findings indicated that international tourists’ socio-demographic characteristics do influence their

travel characteristics; the sources of information more often used by tourists were also ranked as the most important sources, and there are statistically significant differences between tourist satisfaction levels based on their socio-demographic characteristics. She mentioned that the outcomes are useful for decision makers to develop more effective strategies for sustainable development of tourism in Luang Prabang.

There are some studies that related to tourism in Luang Prabang. Some researchers have focused on motivation, the attitude of visitors or human resources or labor and tourism development in Luang Prabang. However, to propose guidelines for sustainable tourism development in tourism destination in Luang Prabang, the number of empirical studies related to the comparative in travel characteristics and satisfaction of international tourists' category is still limited. Thus, there are many unknown points due to a lack of studies on the travel characteristics and satisfaction of international tourists traveling to Luang Prabang as well as to Laos. In summary, as seen in the above discussion, the evaluation of tourist satisfaction needs to be considered in multiple dimensions. Tourists may have varying motivations for visiting particular destinations, and also may have different satisfaction levels and standards.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This study follows the quantitative research approach to describe the socio-demographic aspects, travel characteristics, and satisfaction of international tourist during travel in Luang Prabang. this chapter is explaining the research approach including the study area, questionnaires design, data collecting, and data analyzing as follow:

3.1. Study area

Luang Prabang city was selected for this study, this city is located 420 kilometers north of Vientiane, the capital city of Laos. There are 12 districts, the town of Luang Prabang is the capital city of this province. The city was the royal capital of Lane Xang until it moved to Vientiane in the year 1560 by King Setthathirath and seat of government of the Kingdom of Laos until the Pathet Lao took over in 1975. Currently, the population of the city is roughly 56,000 inhabitants with the UNESCO protected site being inhabited by around 24,000 starts from 1995³. This city is surrounded by mountains and set 700 meters above sea-level where the Nam Khan River and the Mekong

³ Wikipedia. "Luang Prabang". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luang_Prabang. (accessed October 22, 2017).

River meets, the city is rapidly becoming the center of Laos' newfound tourist popularity. Nowadays, the status of the World Heritage city classified by UNESCO in 1995 has influenced international tourists to select the town as their vacation destination (Sirisack, 2014).

Based on the abundance of the environment around the city, the special geography in here has influence there is an attraction in natural, local cultural lifestyle activities, and historical places. In 2015, the tourism development department in Luang Prabang (2016) has classified the tourist sites to the total of 227 places; there are 107 natural sites, 86 cultural sites, and historical sites 34 places. Since Luang Prabang city has been promoted as a tourist destination for two decades by the government of Laos.

Among the Cultural and Historical tourism sites, most are in the town. The Luang Prabang city is an outstanding example of the fusion of traditional architecture and Lao urban structures with those built by the European colonial authorities in the 19th centuries. In the city "The UNESCO report identified 34 Wats (monasteries) and 111 civic buildings for preservation and classifies another 450 houses" (Englemann, 1999; cited in Aas, Ladkin et al. (2005)). Its unique, remarkably well-preserved townscape illustrates a key stage in the blending of these two distinct cultural traditions⁴. Cause of the

⁴ UNESCO. "Town of Luang Prabang". <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/479>. (accessed January 20, 2018).

special of city influence local having the normal lifestyle has been motivating tourists visiting the city such as in the town, particularly the main street, is dotted with many smaller temples (wat). Luang Prabang is well known for its numerous Buddhist temples and monasteries. Every morning at sunrise, hundreds of monks from the various monasteries walk in a procession through the streets accepting alms giving offered by local residents, one of the city's major landmarks is Mount Phou Si located in the center of the town; a large steep hill which despite the constrained scale of the city, is 150 meters (490ft) high; a steep staircase leads to Wat Chom Si shrine. At the top of Mount Phou Si, it gives broad views of the town and river systems and is a popular place for watching the sunset over the Mekong River. At the end of the main street of Luang Prabang, there is a night market where stalls sell shirts, bracelets, and other souvenirs. The Royal Palace Museum and the Wat Xieng Thong temple are among the best known historical sites.

Among the natural tourism sites, most are nearly the town the most popular places are the Kuang Si waterfalls, Tad Sae Waterfalls, Pak Ou Caves and so on. There are most famous adventure activities offered at some sites such as Elephant riding, zip line, trekking to a remote village, cycling, kayaking & rafting, are offered at some sites. as follow:

➤ The Kuang Si waterfalls are located approximately 30 kilometers South of Luang Prabang town and about 30 minutes by car. There are a

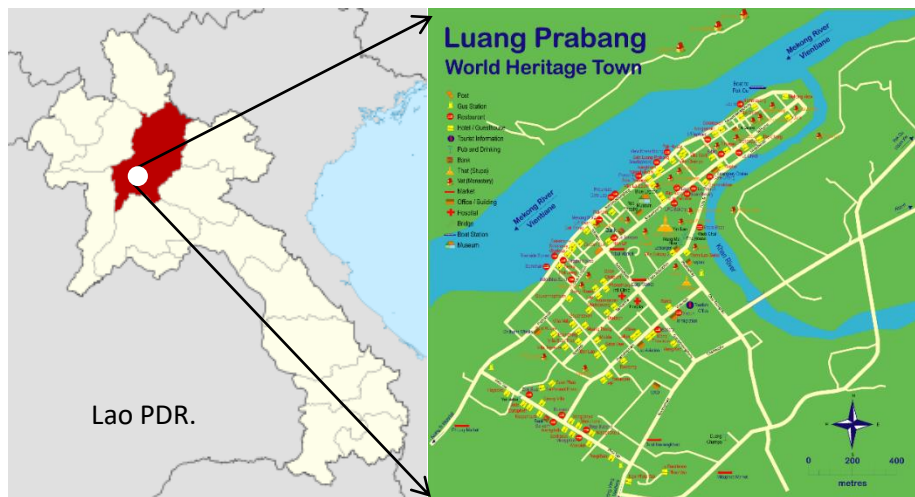
beautiful 50-meter-high waterfall and a group of turquoise pools set in the tropical rainforest. The falls locally called Tat Kuang Si is well visited by tourists and locals alike. The trip from Luang Prabang to the falls is a very scenic ride passing rice paddies, local villages, and green hills. At the entrance to the falls, there are stalls selling food, snacks, and drinks as well as a few souvenir shops. From here, well-maintained walkways and bridges lead into the tropical forest. After a short hike, you will get to a group of shallow pools, filled with turquoise waters.

➤ Pak Ou caves are located about 25 kilometers North of Luang Prabang in the limestone cliffs overlooking the Mekong river, a 16th-century cave monastery filled with thousands of Buddha images. Inside the caves' monastery was filled with thousands of Buddha images since the 16th century. The caves have been a place of worship for centuries, as people believed these places are inhabited by the spirits of the river. According to Laos legend, the caves were discovered in the 16th century⁵. There are 2 ways to get the caves by land there are charter a tuk-tuk, taxi or minivan direct to Ban Pak Ou village opposite the caves on the other side of the river, it takes 40 minutes, Then the visitors are supposed to cross the Mekong river by riding a boat

⁵ Renown travel. "Luang Prabang, Picturesque small town surrounded by rivers and mountains". <https://www.renown-travel.com/laos/luangPrabang.html>, (accessed October 20, 2017).

which they can enjoy the scene of limestone mountains and riverside life during the ride. Alternatively, most fun way to get to the Pak Ou caves is by boat. The trip takes around 2 hours upstream from Luang Prabang with magnificent scenery along the way of the Mekong river and the limestone mountains. The way back downstream takes a little over an hour.

As tourism to Lao now reaching new heights, Luang Prabang is the premier destination in the country because of its interesting mix of culture, history and laidback atmosphere.



(1) Lao PDR. (Laos) Map

(2) Map of Luang Prabang city

Figure 1 Location of Luang Prabang Province in Laos

Source: (1) Wikipedia.org and (2) <http://www.luangPrabang-tourism-laos.org>

3.2. Questionnaires

This study uses a self-administered questionnaire survey with closed-end questions. The questionnaires are designed to cover three sections:

First, personal information of respondents (6 items) such as gender, age, occupation, education, monthly income and the region of residence.

The second part is designed to collect respondents' travel characteristics (10 items): the purpose of visit, type of accommodation, the party size, frequency of visit, main activities. The first and second parts are following the methodology setup used by Lao National Tourism Administration (Tourism Development Department 2016).

Finally, the satisfaction level is measured through items that belong to different categories (29 items) such as tourism attraction, accommodation, facilities and services based on tourism in Luang Prabang. The following items were adopted from Konstantinos, George et al. (2008).

Table 1 Satisfaction items

No.	Satisfaction items
1	Guided excursions and tours to natural areas
2	Guided excursions and tours to cultural areas
3	Historical and Museums places
4	Adventure tour
5	Health services (massage/spa)
6	Sport and recreation facilities
7	The uniqueness accommodation of Luang Prabang reached quality standard
8	Cleanliness of accommodation

Table 1 Satisfaction items (Continue)

9	Facility service in accommodation
10	Friendliness of the local people
11	Personal safety & security
12	Food Sanitation
13	facilities in general (Internet, Restroom, rubbish bin)
14	Attractiveness of natural environment
15	Attractiveness of heritage/ cultural environment
16	Attractiveness of historical environment
17	Bar and restaurants
18	Shopping facilities (souvenirs, handicrafts)
19	Nightlife and entertainment
20	Availability of facilities and services at airport
21	Convenience of local transportation system
22	Attitude of local drivers
23	Level of attractions prices
24	Souvenir and gift prices
25	Local transportation prices
26	Value for money
27	Availability of written material in your language of choice (Tourism information center, websites, guidebook, etc.)
28	Level of language communication
29	Tourist amenity (Tourism signage, etc.)

A pilot survey of a sample size of 20 was conducted at the Luang Prabang international airport to ensure the reliability and user-friendliness of the designed questionnaires in March 2017. All tourists responding to the questionnaires commented on its clarity, readability, and ease of understanding. As a result, no amendment in terms of rewording of items was made.

There were 643,319 visitors in the year 2016. Based on the visitor arrival statistics provided by the tourism office, a sample size was calculated to match the size of each nationality (see Figure 2). The questionnaires were translated into 5 languages: English, French, Thai, Chinese, and Korean.

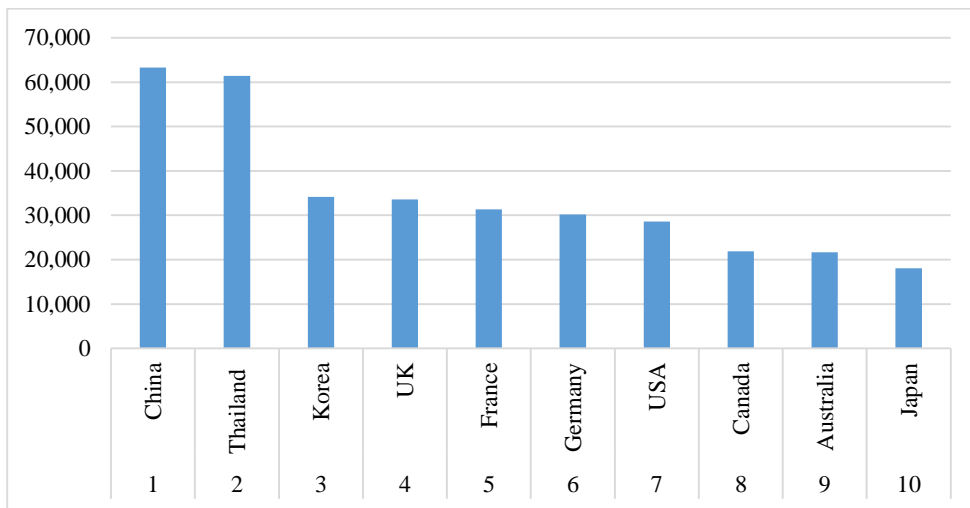


Figure 2 Number of visitor's arrivals to Luang Prabang province in 2016

Source: Tourism Development Department, Laos (2017): page 23

A Linkert scale was applied as an analysis tool to interpret data from the questionnaires. The respondents were asked to rate the items on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (lowest satisfaction) to 5 (highest satisfaction). Base on Sirisack, Xayavong et al. (2014) class width was calculated by dividing the range (maximum level minus minimum level) by the number of classes.

$$\text{Class width} = \frac{\text{Maximum} - \text{Minimum}}{\text{Number of classes}} = \frac{5 - 1}{5} = 0.8$$

According to these criteria, the class intervals for the factors were set as follows:

Average points 1.00 – 1.80 = lowest satisfaction

Average points 1.81 – 2.60 = low satisfaction

Average points 2.61 – 3.40 = moderate satisfaction

Average points 3.41 – 4.20 = high satisfaction

Average points 4.21 – 5.00 = highest satisfaction

3.3. Data collecting

The selected target population were international tourists, who are at least 18 years' old and who traveled to Luang Prabang city. The respondents must have stayed in Luang Prabang for at least one night to be considered. The selection of the respondents is based on probability sampling. A systematic random sampling method was employed to ensure the representativeness of the study.

The survey was conducted from April to September 2017 at previously selected main points: (1) Departure area of Luang Prabang International airport, (2) traditional-cultural tourist places including Luang Prabang National Museum (Royal Palace Museum), Mount Phousy, and 3 temples (Wat Xieng Thong, WatMai *souvannapoumaram*, and Wat

visounnarat), (3) natural tourist places including Kuang Xi waterfall and Tad Sea waterfall, where every visitor was requested to participate in the survey. The surveyor group was made up of professors and an undergraduate student from Souphanouvong University. Prior to the surveying an orientation was provided to understand the contents and the methods. Over the six-month period sampling was carried out with frequency of 4 days a week. A total of 2,011 surveys were completed.

3.4. Data analysis

This study applied a quantitative approach. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic data. Inferential statistical analysis, especially Chi-Square, t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to examine the relationship in socio-demographic aspects and travel characteristics of international tourists, and to examine whether there are differences in international tourist satisfaction levels based on different aspects of Luang Prabang tourism. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 window was used for the analysis.

CHAPTER 4. RESULT

This chapter is going to present the results of the analysis, this part is divided into three parts. The first part is going to present the category of tourists who have visited destination according to the main activities they did in the tourist sites. Second to examine the relationship between socio-demographic, travel characteristics of international tourists and the categories of tourist based on the tourism destination. Lastly, to examine whether there are differences between international tourist' satisfaction level from different aspects of a tourism destination.

All these findings are based on data collected from 2,011 surveys in Luang Prabang. The results of this study were analyzed by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 windows.

4.1. Tourists categories

Segmentation of visitors has often been based on their geographic origin since the country of origin has been universally employed as a basis for collecting and interpreting tourism data. This study has classified the category of tourists according to the major destinations in Luang Prabang. There were 3 group of tourists:

Group (1) Eco-tour tourists were tourists who have visited and participated in activities one or more of the destinations such as visited nature sites, visited the animal conservation area, and adventure tour as trekking, zip line, cycling at the sites.

Group (2) Cultural tourists were tourists who have visited one or more historical and cultural sites such as Buddhist temples and monasteries, Royal Palace Museum, Mount Phou Si. etc., and/or participated in traditional activities as morning almsgiving, cooking Lao food, visited night market.

Group (3) Eco-tour and cultural tourists were a tourist who has visited both ecotourism and cultural sites as presented in table 2:

Table 2 Categories of Tourists.

Group	Tourists categories	Frequency	Percentage(%)
(1)	Eco-tour tourists	249	12.4
(2)	Cultural tourist	618	30.7
(3)	Eco-tour and cultural tourists	1,144	56.9
<i>Total</i>		<i>2,011</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Table 2 shows the total number and percentage of respondents who have visited and joined the activities in the major tourist destinations. The survey found that 56.9% were eco-tour and cultural tourists, followed by cultural tourists were 30.7%, and the eco-tour tourists made up 12.4%.

4.2. Relationship between socio-demographic aspects and travel characteristics, and the categories of tourists

For better understanding and more clear presentation of the data the analysis was divided into two sections as follows:

4.2.1. Relationship between socio-demographic aspects and tourists' categories

To analyzed the relationship, the chi-square analysis was conducted to check the significance level of relationship between Socio-demographic aspects and the categories of tourist. Table 3 is showing the frequency and percentage of international tourists including gender, age, occupation, education level, monthly income, and the continents of tourists came from.

Table 3 Shows the frequencies and percentages of the socio-demographic aspects of visitors to Luang Prabang. The number of female visitors (51.4%) was slightly higher than male visitors (48.6%). Nearly half of visitors were 29 years of age or younger (41.2%), and 58.8% were 30 years and older. The survey revealed that 31.6% of the visitors were employed in a private company, 19.2% were self-employed, the students made up 22.5% of the total visitors, 8.3% were government officials, 7.2% were retirees, and

Table 3 Relationship between Socio-demographic aspects and the categories of tourist.

Socio-demographic aspects		Total N=2,011 (100%)	Categories of tourist (group)			P-Value/ Sig.
			(1)	(2)	(3)	
			N=249	N=618	N=1,144	
Gender	Male (%)	48.6	48.2	51.1	47.3	2.389/ .303
	Female (%)	51.4	51.8	48.9	52.7	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Age	18-29 (%)	41.2	39.8	29.0	48.2	94.248/ .000
	30-39 (%)	28.4	28.5	27.3	29.0	
	40 –up (%)	30.3	31.7	43.7	22.8	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Occupation	Government (%)	8.3	4.4	8.7	8.8	40.180/ .000
	Private Company (%)	31.6	34.1	31.2	31.2	
	Student (%)	22.5	27.3	19.3	23.3	
	Retried (%)	7.2	9.2	10.5	5.0	
	Self-Employed (%)	19.2	16.1	21.4	18.8	
	Other (%)	11.2	8.8	8.9	12.9	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Education level	High school (%)	15.6	14.5	14.2	16.5	56.327/ .000
	Bachelor degree (%)	47.5	50.2	41.6	50.2	
	Master degree (%)	27.7	22.9	29.1	28.1	
	Ph.D. degree (%)	9.1	12.4	15.0	5.2	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Monthly Income (US\$)	Less than 1,000 (%)	19.2	19.3	16.0	20.9	40.643/ .000
	1,001-3,000 (%)	39.9	38.6	33.2	43.9	
	3,001-5,000 (%)	24.1	25.3	29.8	20.7	
	Over 5,000 (%)	16.8	16.9	21.0	14.5	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Continents	Asia (%)	42.4	47.8	48.1	38.1	39.695/ .000
	Europe (%)	29.7	28.1	21.5	34.5	
	North and south America (%)	20.8	20.1	22.5	20.0	
	Australia and Africa(%)	7.1	4.0	7.9	7.3	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

11.2% of the visitors did not report any occupation. It was interesting to note that the education level of visitors to Luang Prabang was relatively high with 47.5% of respondents reporting Bachelor degree, followed by 27.7% of visitors that hold a Master degree, a smaller percentage of 15.6% respondents reported to finish high school was, and 9.1% reported to hold a Ph.D. degree. Regarding personal monthly income measured in US dollars, 19.2% of visitors reported less than \$1,000, 39.9% of the visitors had a monthly income between \$1,001 and 3,000, followed by 24.1% of visitors with income between 3,001 and 5,000 and 16.8% of visitors who earn more over \$5,000. In addition, in terms of the region of precedence, the majority came from Asia (42.4%), followed by Europe (29.7%), and North and South America (20.8%), and Australia and Africa (7.1%).

The Pearson's Chi-squared test was used to investigate if there was a statistically significant difference relationship between Socio-demographic aspects and categories of tourists. The results of the test showed that the eco-tour and cultural tourists (group 3) were younger tourists (18-29 years old), showing the largest proportion of visitors in that age compared with group (1) and (2), and the cultural tourists were the older tourists having the largest proportion of visitors in the age group of 40 or higher; In terms of the Occupation of tourist, the finding revealed that the largest frequencies were observed in case of students and private company employees in eco-tour

tourist group (1). In the group (2) there was a high amount of self-employed and retired visitors. In terms of the Education level of tourist, the finding showed that in the group (1) and (3) there was a higher percentage of bachelor degree holders than in the group (2). In contrast, Ph.D. and Master degree holders were found more often in the group (2). In terms of the monthly income of tourist, the highest percentage here was found in the group (3), having income between (US\$) 1,001-3,000, followed by monthly income higher than (US\$) 3,000 in the group (2), more than in group (1) and (3). Considering the countries of tourists' origin, the largest percentage of European visitors was reported in the group (3), while the tourists from America has a high percentage in the group (2). In contrast, the relationship in travels' group and gender was not statistically significant.

The result found that: the relationship between Socio-demographic aspects and categories of international tourists when compare the percentage of frequency of each factor found that:

Group (1) Eco-tour tourists have higher percentage proportion in private company occupation and student's situation, half of them has a bachelor degree in education level large than others.

Group (2) Cultural tourists have higher percentage proportion in age range of traveler older than 40 years old, has an occupation in self-employed and retired, Education level with Master and Ph.D. degree, most of them have

monthly income higher than \$3,000, they came from Asia and America higher than others;

Group (3) Eco-tour and cultural tourists have higher percentage proportion in age half of them were tourists between 18-29 years old, has education level in a bachelor degree, most of them have a monthly income between \$1,001-3,000, and they came from Europe continents.

One of the main goals of this study was working on Hypothesis 1: The relationship in the socio-demographic aspects with different types of international tourists traveling in Luang Prabang is no difference. Based on the finding this hypothesis was rejected because the relationship of the socio-demographic in three group tourists had a statistically significant difference in age range, occupation, education level, monthly income, and the country they came from. only the gender of international tourists no had a statistically significant difference.

4.2.2. Relationship between travel characteristics and tourist's categories

To analyze the relationship, the chi-square was performed to define the relationship between travel characteristics and the categories of tourists. In table 4 the frequencies and percentages are presented including the Mode of arrival Luang Prabang; Purpose of visit; Accommodation; Persons accompanied with; Frequency of visit; Length of stay; Daily costs of accommodation (US\$); and Daily costs in LPB (US\$).

In table 4: Showed the travel characteristics of visitors that: Most of the transportation that visitors used to get in Luang Prabang was by airplane 55.6%. Follow by public bus and minivan were 34%, there were 10.3% traveling by riverboat. The purpose of visitors for holidays was 80.5%, followed by for business 10.3%, regarding for seminar and visit family was 9.2%. In term of accommodation, the biggest group of tourists stayed in the hotels 46.4%, the second group stayed in guesthouses 42.9%, the third group stayed in resort and spa 10.7%. The tourists who have traveled with their partners 28.5%, followed by tourists with friends or colleague 28.3%, those who like to travel alone were 23.6%, Traveled with tour group 9.9%, those accompanied with family 8.1%. A total of 71.5% of tourist revealed that they were first-time visitors to Luang Prabang and only 28.5% indicated that they were repeated visited.

Table 4 Relationship between travel characteristics and tourist's category.

Travel characteristics		Total N=20 11	Categories of tourist (group)			P-Value/ Sig.
			(1)	(2)	(3)	
			N=24 9	N=61 8	N=11 44	
The mode of arrival Luang Prabang	Airplane (%)	55.6	50.2	60.7	54.1	10.953/ .027
	Bus and minivan (%)	34.0	37.3	30.7	35.1	
	Boat (%)	10.3	12.4	8.6	10.8	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
The purpose of visit	Business (%)	10.3	12.9	15.9	6.7	61.207/ .000
	Holiday (%)	80.5	75.5	71.7	86.4	
	Official, seminar and visit family (%)	9.2	11.6	12.5	6.9	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Accommod- ation	Hotel (%)	46.4	43.4	50.5	44.8	26.549/ .000
	Guesthouse (%)	42.9	50.2	35.6	45.3	
	Resort and spa (%)	10.7	6.4	13.9	9.9	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Persons companion	Alone (%)	23.6	26.5	25.9	21.8	39.210/ .000
	Spouse/Partner (%)	28.5	27.3	26.7	29.7	
	Colleague/Friend (%)	28.3	21.7	25.1	31.5	
	Family with children (%)	9.6	7.6	10.4	9.7	
	Tour group (%)	9.9	16.9	12.0	7.3	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Frequency of visit	First visit (%)	71.5	65.5	61.7	78.1	77.398/ .000
	Second visit (%)	15.4	20.5	16.8	13.5	
	Third visit and more (%)	13.1	14.1	21.5	8.4	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Length of Stay	1-2 days (%)	15.1	14.1	16.8	14.3	12.778/ .047
	3-4 days (%)	46.9	41.0	45.3	49.1	
	5-6 days (%)	20.4	20.9	20.2	20.5	
	Over 6 days (%)	17.6	24.1	17.6	16.1	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Daily costs of accommod ation (US\$)	Less than \$30 (%)	46.6	45.8	29.8	55.9	151.712/ .000
	Between \$ 30-90 (%)	35.9	24.9	45.5	33.0	
	Over than \$ 91 (%)	17.5	29.3	24.8	11.0	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Daily costs in LPB (US\$)	Less than \$ 10 (%)	12.8	12.9	10.7	13.9	53.783/ .000
	Between \$ 10-40 (%)	57.5	58.6	50.2	61.2	
	Between \$ 41-70 (%)	16.4	12.4	19.3	15.7	
	Over than 71 (%)	13.3	16.1	19.9	9.2	
	Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	

The length of stay of international tourists spent in Luang Prabang was 1-2 days (15.1%), 3-4 days (46.9), 5-6 days (20.4%), and over 6 days (17.6%). It was interesting to note the daily cost tourists spending for accommodation were between Less than \$30 (46.6%), between \$30 and 90 (35.9%), and over \$91 (17.5%), In term of spending money per day for traveled Less than \$10 (12.8%), between \$10-40 (57.5%), between \$41-70 (16.4%), and over \$71 (13.3%).

Pearson's Chi-squared test was used to investigate if there was a significant relationship between travel characteristics and type of tourists. The results of the test showed that: There was a statistically significant relationship between travels' group and the mode of arrival of tourist to Luang Prabang. There was the largest proportion traveler to Luang Prabang by airplane in the group (2). on the other hands, there was a higher percentage in the mode of travel by bus and minivan and boat in the group (1) than group (2) and (3); For the purpose of visit in Luang Prabang of tourists. In group (2) has a high percentage purpose in business, while the purpose of visit for holiday has higher percentage in group (3), and the lower percentage for official, seminar and visit family in group (3); The type of accommodation that tourists like to stay during traveled in Luang Prabang. The tourists' group (2) were high percentage in Hotel type, the tourist group (1) like to stay at Guesthouse than others tourists group; During the trip to Luang Prabang, the

tourists like to travel companion with spouse/Partner and colleagues/Friend in the group (3) were high percentage than others group. In the same way, the tourists like to travel with family and children higher percentage in the group (2). And group (1) like to travel alone; For the frequency of visit Luang Prabang, the higher percentage of first visiting was tourists group (3). Follow by second visited was tourists group (1), and third and more visited was the tourist's group (2); The length of stay in Luang Prabang. The tourists like to stay during 3-4 days and has a high percentage in the group (3) than others group. In contrast, the tourist group (1) like to stay longer than group (2) and (3); The tourists spent money for the daily cost of accommodation between (US\$) 30-90 has had a higher percentage in the group (2) more than others, on the other hands, the tourist's group (1) and (3) has have spent money less (US\$) 30 than tourists group (2). Moreover, the tourist's group (3) has had a lower percentage of spent money over than \$ 91; And tourists have spent money in daily cost for traveling in Luang Prabang the higher percentage of spent money between (US\$)10-40 in the group (3) more than group (2) and (1). Conversely, the tourist's group (2) has a higher number of spent money for traveling more than group (1) and (3).

The result found that: the relationship between travel characteristics and categories of international tourists when compare the percentage of frequency of each factor found that:

(1) The Eco-tour tourists have a higher percentage proportion in mode of arrival to Luang Prabang by bus and minivan, the tourist like to stay in guesthouse, like to travel alone, frequency visited in the second time, spent the time longer than 6 days, spent money for daily accommodation less than US\$ 30 and some of them spent over \$ 90.

(2) The Cultural tourist has greater percentage ratio in the mode of arrival to Luang Prabang by Airplane, has a purpose to visit for business and official, seminar and visit family, like to stay in Hotel, and Resort and spa. Like to travel with family, visited Luang Prabang more than 3 times, spent money for daily accommodation between US\$ 30-90, and spent money for travel cost over \$71.

(3) The eco-tour and cultural tourist has greater percentage ratio in the purpose of visiting for holiday, like to traveled with spouse/partner and colleague, more than haft of group was first visited Luang Prabang, half of them spent the time for traveling among 3-4 days, over half of them spent money for daily accommodation cost less than \$30, and spent money for traveling in daily cost among \$10-40.

On Hypothesis 2: the relationship in travel characteristics with different types of international tourists traveling in Luang Prabang is no difference. Based on the finding this hypothesis was rejected, as the summarized in above the travel characteristics was difference in three group

of tourist's such mode of arrival to Luang Prabang, purpose of visit, type of accommodation, person companied, frequency of visit, length stay, daily cost of accommodation and daily cost of travel in Luang Prabang.

4.3. Differences in international tourist satisfaction levels based on different aspects of Luang Prabang tourism

To investigate the difference of satisfaction level in the satisfaction factors totally twenty-eight items. to reduce the wide variable of satisfactions' factor, the exploratory factor analysis was applied. and to investigate the whether international tourist' satisfaction level compare mean with the tourists' category from different aspects of tourism destination in Luang Prabang the one-way ANOVA test was performed.

4.3.1. International tourists' satisfaction factor analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted as a validity verification of the satisfaction item and to test reliability and internal consistency of satisfaction score, a Cronbach alpha was calculated, and a principal components analysis with VARIMAX orthogonal rotation was performed on satisfaction items to identify latent variables associated with tourist satisfaction. According to Mohammad Mehedy Hassan and Shahnewaz

(2014). Variables with Eigenvalue under 0.9 and factor loading under 0.4 are eliminated. the one out of the 29 measuring items were eliminated through this process. Item loading the highest on each of the factors were used to construct a simple additive scale to assess the importance of each factor

Table 5 Refining satisfaction measuring items.

Satisfaction Factor (Items)	Factor component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tourism and Recreation services							
Guided excursions to cultural areas	.819						
Guided excursions to natural areas	.730						
Sport and Recreation facilities	.726						
Adventure tour	.701						
Health service (massage/spa/sauna)	.698						
Historical and Museums places	.586						
Facility and transportation							
Local transportation fee		.695					
Local transportation system		.694					
Attitude of local drivers		.686					
Souvenir		.637					
Entrance tourists' sites fee		.605					
Availability of facility and services at airport		.601					
Value for money		.562					
Tourism Attraction							
Attractiveness of heritage/ cultural environment			.857				
Attractiveness of historical environment			.837				
Attractiveness of natural environment			.706				

Table 5 Refining satisfaction measuring items (Continue)

Accommodation standard							
The uniqueness accommodation of Luang Prabang reached quality standard				.787			
Cleanliness of accommodation				.781			
Facility service				.751			
Tourism information							
Level of language communication					.777		
Availability of written material in your language					.760		
Tourist amenity (Tourism signage, etc.)					.732		
Restaurant and entertainment							
Bar and restaurants						.714	
Nightlife and entertainment						.689	
Shopping facilities						.595	
Public safety & security							
Food Sanitation							.753
Facilities in public							.693
Personal safety & security							.582
Initial Eigenvalues	7.088	3.238	1.801	1.529	1.430	1.183	1.084
% of Variance	12.262	11.732	8.111	8.061	7.600	7.342	6.865
Cronbach's Alpha	.837	.825	.797	.777	.759	.653	.691

tourist satisfaction to the individual. The Cronbach alpha was employed to measure reliability or internal consistency of the item. The items, their factor loadings, and their Cronbach alpha are shown in Table 5.

Each retained factor was labeled based on the characteristics and nature of the variables in which they retained from. From the result in table 05 show the factor component and each item. Each factor name as 1) Tourism and recreation services; 2) Facility and Transportation; 3) Tourism attraction; 4) Accommodation standard; 5) Tourism information; 6) Restaurant and entertainment; 7) Public safety & security.

4.3.2. Difference in tourist satisfaction level among the group tourists' category

In this part of the study, to investigate the difference satisfaction level among the group tourists' category the One-way ANOVA was calculated if there were statistically significant a Dunnett-T3 post hoc test (Table 7) verified the significant difference in each group as showed in Table 6.

Table 6 shows the results of analyzed the difference satisfaction level total of 2,011 respondents found that there were 7 main satisfaction factors. International tourists have high satisfaction level in Tourism attraction (\bar{X} =4.09) follow by Accommodation standard (\bar{X} =3.94); Public safety &

security (3.84); Tourism information (\bar{X} =3.69); Facility and Transportation (\bar{X} = 3.46) and Restaurant and entertainment (\bar{X} = 3.42); and have Low satisfaction level only Tourism and recreation services (\bar{X} = 2.50). A statistically significant difference means between the group of tourists and the satisfaction level. Show as compare mean in table 7.

Table 6 Difference in tourists satisfaction level among the tourist's category.

Satisfaction Factors		Tourist's category				F-test	P-value
		Total	(1)	(2)	(3)		
		N=2,011	N=249	N=618	N=1,144		
1) Tourism and Recreation services	\bar{X}	2.50	2.56	2.76	2.34	16.2	.000
	S.D.	1.50	1.49	1.40	1.53	06	
2) Facility and transportation	\bar{X}	3.46	3.27	3.50	3.48	5.56	.004
	S.D.	0.95	1.04	0.81	0.99	8	
3) Tourism Attraction	\bar{X}	4.09	3.86	3.89	4.25	37.0	.000
	S.D.	0.96	1.10	1.05	0.84	99	
4) Accommodation standard	\bar{X}	3.94	3.88	3.87	3.99	3.81	.022
	S.D.	0.95	1.00	0.92	0.95	0	
5) Tourism information	\bar{X}	3.69	3.50	3.68	3.74	6.04	.002
	S.D.	1.02	1.13	0.94	1.03	0	
6) Restaurant and entertainment	\bar{X}	3.42	3.15	3.46	3.46	8.15	.000
	S.D.	1.13	1.38	0.97	1.15	5	
7) Public safety & security	\bar{X}	3.84	3.69	3.79	3.90	7.36	.001
	S.D.	0.87	1.06	0.83	0.85	7	

Remark: (1) Eco-tour tourists group; (2) Cultural tourists group; (3) Eco-tour and cultural tourists.

Table 7 Comparison means the group of tourists and the satisfaction.

Satisfaction factor	(1)Eco-tour tourists (\bar{X})	(2) Cultural tourists (\bar{X})	(3) eco-tour and culture (\bar{X})
1) Tourism and Recreation services	2.56	2.76	2.34
(1) Eco-tour tourists	-	(0.187)	(0.111)
(2) Cultural tourists	-	-	(0.000)
2) Facility and transportation	3.27	3.50	3.48
(1) Eco-tour tourists	-	(0.007)	(0.014)
(2) Cultural tourists	-	-	(0.957)
3) Tourism Attraction	3.86	3.89	4.25
(1) Eco-tour tourists	-	(0.973)	(0.000)
(2) Cultural tourists	-	-	(0.000)
4) Accommodation standard	3.88	3.87	3.99
(1) Eco-tour tourists	-	(1.000)	(0.269)
(2) Cultural tourists	-	-	(0.031)
5) Tourism information	3.50	3.68	3.74
(1) Eco-tour tourists	-	(0.079)	(0.005)
(2) Cultural tourists	-	-	(0.450)
5) Restaurant and entertainment	3.15	3.46	3.46
(1) Eco-tour tourists	-	(0.004)	(0.003)
(2) Cultural tourists	-	-	(1.000)
7) Public safety & security	3.69	3.79	3.90
(1) Eco-tour tourists	-	(0.462)	(0.011)
(2) Cultural tourists	-	-	(0.026)

Remark: Score in the bracket is P-value

The respondents were classified into 3 group based on the destination

The results of comparisons between group indicated that:

1) There was a statistically significant satisfaction difference between groups on the Tourism and recreation services as determined by one-way

ANOVA ($F= 16.206$, $p=0.000$). the finding revealed that the tourist Cultural tourists (group 2) have a greater score satisfaction level than eco-tour and cultural tourists (group 3). There was no statistically significant difference between the (group 1) and (group 3).

2) There was a statistically significant satisfaction difference between groups on Facility and transportation as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F= 5.568$, $p=0.004$). the finding suggestively that the cultural tourist's group (2) was has a greater score satisfaction level than eco-tour tourists group (1). On the other hand, eco-tour and cultural tourists group (3) was has a higher satisfaction than eco-tour tourists group (1) as well.

3) There was a statistically significant satisfaction difference between groups on the Tourism Attraction as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F=37.099$, $p=0.000$). the finding revealed that eco-tour and cultural tourist's group (3) was has a higher satisfaction than eco-tour tourists group (1) and cultural tourists group (2).

4) There was a statistically significant satisfaction difference between groups on the Accommodation standard services as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F= 3.810$, $p=0.022$). the finding showed that eco-tour and cultural tourist's group (3) was has a higher satisfaction than cultural tourists group (2).

5) There was a statistically significant satisfaction difference between groups on the Tourism information as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F=6.040$, $p=0.002$). the finding indicated that eco-tour and cultural tourist's group (3) was has a higher satisfaction than eco-tour tourists group (1).

6) There was a statistically significant satisfaction difference between groups on the Restaurant and entertainment as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F=8.155$, $p=0.000$). it was found that the cultural tourist group (2) and eco-tour and cultural tourists group (3) were has a higher satisfaction than eco-tour tourists group (1).

7) There was a statistically significant satisfaction difference between groups on the Public safety & security as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F=7.367$, $p=0.001$). the finding showed that eco-tour and cultural tourists group (3) were has a higher satisfaction than eco-tour tourists group (1) and group (2).

The result of the satisfaction level of international tourists' aspects found that:

Group (1) The Eco-tourists has had high satisfaction level in accommodation standard, followed by tourism attraction, public safety & security, and tourism information. has having moderate satisfaction level in facility and transportation and restaurant, and entertainment, and low satisfaction level in tourism and recreation services, respectively. Thus,

comparison with others groups, suggestively that all of the factors were low satisfaction than others except the tourism and recreation services were has a slightly high satisfaction than eco-tour and cultural tourists.

Group (2) Regarding the cultural tourists were expression consistent high satisfaction in 6-factor tourism in Luang Prabang starting with tourism attraction, accommodation standard, public safety & security, tourism information, facility and transportation, and restaurant and entertainment, respectively. Only the tourism and recreation services have had low satisfaction level. Therefore, compare means with others group suggest that there was a significant different satisfaction in tourism and recreation services having high than eco-tour and cultural tourists and show the significant difference in facility and transportation, and tourism attraction having slight low satisfaction level than eco-tour and cultural tourists.

Group (3) It was interesting that The eco-tour and cultural tourists gave the highest satisfaction level in tourism attraction, followed by high satisfaction level in accommodation standard, public safety and security, tourism information, facility and transportation than others tourist group, and finally, have low satisfaction only in tourism and recreation service. Due to the comparison means with others group suggested that there was significant difference having the highest satisfaction level in the row and have a higher

satisfaction level than others and have lower satisfaction in tourism and recreation services.

The difference in the satisfaction level of tourist's categories has rejected the hypothesis. Because the results showed the differences satisfaction level in tourism attraction the eco-tour and cultural tourist gave a highest satisfied more than the eco-tour tourists and the cultural tourists. In others, the cultural tourist made up the moderate satisfied level while the eco-tour tourists and eco-tourists and cultural tourists have a low satisfied level. Moreover, the cultural tourists and eco-tourists and cultural tourists made up a high satisfaction level while the eco-tourists showed just moderated satisfaction in the Facility and transportation, and Restaurant and entertainment factors. In another hand, there are accommodation standard, Public safety & security, and Tourism information factors that all tourists have the same satisfaction in high level.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

The goals of this study were to answer the research questions, what is the relationship of socio-demographic and travel characteristics with different types of international tourists traveling in Luang Prabang? And what are the differences in satisfaction level of international tourists from different aspects of Luang Prabang tourism? To answer these question, specific objectives were set to examine the relationships.

In this study, the category of visitors has been classified into three groups by the type of tourism in Luang Prabang. The largest proportion is made up of tourists who like to visit eco-tour and cultural site, second, is the made up of Cultural/historic tourists, and last is the group composed of Eco-tour tourists.

A major reason for Luang Prabang attracting so many tourists is that it is home to the most famous historic site in Laos Many historic temples and Lao-French buildings remain as relics of this historical background throughout Luang Prabang. In addition to visiting the World Heritage site of Luang Prabang, tourists can also visit the surrounding areas, which offer various attractions including caves, waterfalls, and villages. As well as being a World Heritage site, Luang Prabang is also famous for the scenic mountains

that surround the town, as well as for its multi-ethnic population, comprised of many different ethnic groups.

Based on the results of this study the relationship between socio-demographic, and travel characteristic of international tourists with three group tourists was found to have a statistical significance in age range, occupation, education level, monthly income, and the country of origin of tourists. This study confirmed the findings of previous research. Particularly, this study is consistent with the study by Kozad (2003); Yu and Goulden (2006), Thongmala Phosikham, Anoulom Vilayphone et al. (2015), and Sirisack, Xayavong et al. (2014) as the tourists want to have more than one experience at a destination, and it's also, indicated influence to their travel characteristics.

Regarding the results of this study found that the highest satisfaction of international tourists is in “tourism attraction factor”. In this regard, the destination attributes that most influence the satisfaction of tourists are specific elements of tourism Ramires, Brandão et al. (2017), Sirisack, Xayavong et al. (2014); Thongmala Phosikham, Anoulom Vilayphone et al. (2015); Cong (2016). And the study of Xayavong (2013) confirmed that regarding the satisfaction level of Thai tourists visiting Luang Prabang the visitors have a highly satisfied level when their trip had finished. On the other hand, the finding found that the international tourists have low satisfaction

level in “Tourism and Recreation Services factor” and the Eco-tour tourists are moderately satisfied with “Restaurant and entertainment” and “Facility and transportation”. The reported satisfaction of those two groups was lower when compared with other tourists group. This results indicated the weak point of tourism in Luang Prabang. This finding implies that the destination managers need to improve the current standard of services to yield higher visitors’ satisfaction to increase their recommendation of Luang Prabang internationally and to increase the percentage of tourist that return to visit the region.

The results of this study provide information to support the local government in enhancing the strategy to improve the destination in terms of its competitiveness with other destinations nearby Laos. If done successfully, tourists will stay longer and spend more, which will help the tourism sector in Luang Prabang to develop constantly, increase employment and generate income.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1. Conclusion

Tourism industry is more popular and there is a significant increase in both number of tourists and tourism services when Luang Prabang City has been approved by UNESCO as the World Heritage City in 1995. Luang Prabang has been Known as the destination of cultural, historical and natural tourist sites. The study on the relationship between social and demographic aspects of international tourists does influence to travel characteristics. The findings found that when demographic aspects of international tourists are statistically different, the travel characteristics will be different. By comparing between natural sites' tourists and cultural sites' tourists, natural sites' tourists or eco-tourists are young and under 30 years old prefer visiting cultural and natural tourist sites and this tourist group spend less money on traveling and accomodation but traveling period is longer by comparing to the aged tourists. For instance, young tourists prefer cheap accomodation during their travelling. Conversely, aged tourists have limited travelling time but they are more capable of spending more travelling and accomodation fee by comparing to the youg tourist group.

Based on the study results, there is a difference in satisfaction on each travelling type and there is also influence on tourist experience. In addition, the study also found that tourists are satisfied with surrounding environment of tourist site, uniqueness of local accommodation, physical characteristics of Luang Prabang city, cultural and natural tourist activities and living style of local people. When tourists have an opportunity to participate in tourist activity along with local people, this can significantly contribute to tourist satisfaction and attract those tourists coming back to travel in Luang Prabang again. Apart from this, this study indicates the difference of satisfaction among tourist groups and it also shows the strengths which should be reinforced and weaknesses which should be improved in tourist industry in order to increase tourist satisfaction in the future.

6.2. Limitation and recommendation

In conducting this research, a limitation became apparent. The sample size used in the research was quite small for eco-tour tourists group when comparing with cultural and eco-tour and cultural group.

Based on the finding of the study, the results of the analysis suggest the following recommendations for tourism destination and all tourism related sectors in Luang Prabang.

1) The results show a low level of satisfaction from “Tourism and Recreation services”. It is recommended for sport and recreation facilities, health services (massage/spa), and adventure tour. recommendations for this factor should be preserved in natural sites and giving more important information at the sites and add navigator direct to the sites. In regards to this issue, the tourism development department in Luan Prabang should review the factors needed for enhancing tourism services and upgrade the recreation activities in cooperation with tourist-related businesses.

2) The recommendation regarding the tourist’s experiences with “Facility and transportation” is to implement improvements because currently, the transportation in Luang Prabang does not have a set standard of the service price, it is unsafe, and the condition of some of the roads is bad, which increases the danger of accidents. In order to solve this issue, the tourism development department in Luang Prabang can provide the information to the local government related to the transportation, improve the services and control the standard.

3) Regarding the “Facilities in public” factor, the high recommendation from tourists should add more the rubbish at the tourist sites

and around the city. For this situation, the tourism development department can discuss and co-working with Urban planning department in Luang Prabang to solve this issue.

6.3. Recommendation for further research.

Based on the result of the study a further research on this topic can be suggested. Future studies should focus on conservation and development in the natural sites specific to the Eco-tourism and recreation activities for the best destinations in the vicinity and in Luang Prabang for increasing the number of tourists and extending the revenue from this activity to remote areas to benefit local people who live near the natural sites. The involvement of rural people in tourism and new supporting activities would enhance the local economy and provide much-needed income.

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Appendix

Questionnaires for Tourist Satisfaction in Luang Prabang (LPB)

Code:

Dear tourist:

We are conducting an academic survey regarding your satisfaction with Tourism in Luang Prabang. Please indicate the level of satisfaction for each statement according to your real perception. Your comments are very important for this academic research survey. The survey data will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality. Therefore, please feel at ease to answer the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your assistance.

Department of Forest Environment Sciences, Seoul National University, South Korea.

Department of Tourism Management, Souphanouvong University, Laos.

1. Respondent socio-demographics

1) Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

2) Age

☐ 18 – 29

☐ 30 – 39

☐ 40 – 49

☐ 50 – 59

☐ 60 and above

3) Occupation

☐ Government

☐ Private company

☐ Student

☐ Retried

☐ Self-employed

☐ other_____

4) Education

☐ Below high school

☐ High school

☐ College degree

☐ Master degree

☐ Ph.D. degree

5) Monthly income

☐ Less than \$1,000 ☐ \$1,000 – 3,000 ☐ \$3,001 – 5,000 ☐ over

\$5,000

6) Please, name your country of residence: _____

2. Travel characteristics

7) Mode of arrival Luang Prabang

☐ By airplane

☐ By bus

☐ By boat

☐ By car

8) The purpose of visit

☐ Business

☐ Holiday

☐ Visit family

☐ Official, convention and seminar ☐ others

9) Main activities (Can choose more than one)

Nature activities

☐ Visit to natural sites ☐ Elephant riding ☐ Adventure (Trekking, Zip line, etc.)

Traditional activities (Culture and Historic/ Heritage city)

☐ Overall visit to the city ☐ Visit to heritage/ cultural sites
☐ Cultural events ☐ Nightlife/Entertainment
☐ Museums/monument ☐ Cooking Lao food
☐ Shopping (Night market, etc.) ☐ Morning alms giving
☐ Others _____

10) Type of accommodation

☐ Hotel ☐ Guesthouse ☐ Resort and spa ☐ Other _____

11) Persons accompanied with

☐ Alone ☐ Spouse/ Partner ☐ Colleague/Friend
☐ Family with children ☐ Tour group ☐ Other

12) Frequency of visit

☐ First visit ☐ Second visit ☐ Third visit ☐ more than third visit

13) Length of Stay

☐ 1-2 days ☐ 3-4 days ☐ 5-6 days ☐ more than 6 days

14) Daily costs of accommodation in Luang Prabang per person per night.

☐ Less than \$ 30 ☐ \$ 30-90 ☐ \$ 91-150
☐ \$ 151-300 ☐ over \$ 300

15) Daily costs in Luang Prabang per person excluding accommodation

☐ Less than \$ 10 ☐ \$ 10 – 40 ☐ \$ 41 – 70 ☐ \$71 – 100 ☐ More than \$100

3. Satisfaction level of tourist visiting Luang Prabang (LPB).

In this part of the questionnaire we ask you to rate your satisfaction with your visit to this tourist destination on a scale of 1 to 5, where (5) = Highly satisfied, and (1) = Not satisfied.

Factors	Level of Satisfaction					
Tourism and Recreation services	N/A	Highly Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not Satisfied
Guided excursions and tours to natural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Guided excursions and tours to cultural areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1

Historical and Museums places	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Adventure tour	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Health services (massage/spa)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Sport and recreation facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Accommodation	N/A					
The uniqueness accommodation of Luang Prabang reached quality standard	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Cleanliness of accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Facility service in accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Facilities and Services	N/A					
Friendliness of the local people	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Personal safety & security	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Food sanitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
facilities in general (Internet, Restroom, rubbish bin)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Attractiveness of natural and cultural sites	N/A					
Attractiveness of natural environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Attractiveness of heritage/ cultural environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Attractiveness of historical environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Entertainment	N/A					
Bar and restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Shopping facilities (souvenirs, handicrafts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Nightlife and entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Transportation	N/A					
Availability of facilities and services at airport	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Convenience of local transportation system	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1

Attitude of local drivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Pricing	N/A					
Attractions' prices	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Souvenir and gift prices	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Local transportation prices	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Value for money	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Language, communication and information	N/A					
Availability of written material in your language of choice (Tourism information center, websites, guidebook, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Level of language communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1
Tourist amenity (Tourism signage, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	4	3	2	1

4. Recommendation.

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Thank you very much for your time and answers!